

Message Text

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APPROVED BY EUR - MR. HARTMAN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 250694 TOSEC 160189

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO

SUBJECT: EUR BRIEFING MEMORANDUM - PORTUGAL SITREP

REF: SECTO 16083

FOR SONNENFELDT FROM HARTMAN

1. POLITICAL TENSIONS CONTINUE UNABATED IN PORTUGAL AS THE SIXTH PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT PURSUES ITS POLICY OF "TAKING SMALL STEPS" TOWARD REESTABLISHING AUTHORITY IN THE COUNTRY. THE TWO LATEST MOVES WERE:

-- A GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT THAT IT WOULD SUE THE LEFT-IST NEWSPAPER REPUBLICA FOR A SLANDEROUS ATTACK AGAINST THE COMMANDER OF THE NEWLY-FORMED MILITARY INTERVENTION GROUP (AMI). THE GROUP IS COMPOSED MAINLY OF COMMANDOS AND IS LOYAL TO THE GOVERNMENT.

-- RELEASE OF A POLICE REPORT ON THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSES OF THE MARCH 7 POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN SETUBAL. THE REPORT CLEARLY BLAMES COMMUNISTS AND ULTRA-LEFTISTS, DESCRIBING THEM AS FORCES INTENT UPON DESTROYING THE REVOLUTION.

2. LAST WEEK-END, A PEACEFUL RALLY BY THE CHRISTIAN
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DEMOCRATIC CDS PARTY DREW 35,000 SUPPORTERS IN OPORTO ,

THE POPULAR DEMOCRATS (PPD) STAGED SIMILAR PRO-GOVERNMENT RALLIES IN TWO SOUTHERN PORTUGUESE TOWNS AND THE COMMUNISTS HELD A PARTY MEETING IN THE CITY OF TORRES NOVAS. NORTHERN MILITARY REGION COMMANDER, PIRES VELOSE AGAIN CAME UNDER FIRE FROM THE LEFT, THIS TIME FOR HIS DECISION TO FREE THE ASSETS OF SEVERAL OPORTO FIRMS WHICH HAD BEEN FROZEN BY THE GONCALVES GOVERNMENT ON VAGUE CHARGES OF ECONOMIC SABOTAGE. PIRES VELOSO IS ALSO CONTINUING TO PURGE LEFTIST OFFICERS IN UNITS UNDER HIS COMMAND AND IS SAID TO BE ATTEMPTING TO FRUSTRATE LEFTIST PLANS FOR A MASS PLENARY MEETING ON OCTOBER 24, THE DAY THE HEAVY ARTILLERY REGIMENT IS SCHEDULED TO COMPLETE ITS INQUIRY INTO RECENT INCIDENTS IN WHICH THE REGIMENT DEFIED PIRES VELOSO'S AUTHORITY.

3. IN ANOTHER ATTEMPT AT RESTORING ORDER TO PORTUGAL, PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES (ACTING IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES) ORDERED SECURITY FORCES TO SHOOT ANYONE WHO USES WEAPONS AGAINST MILITARY OR CIVILIAN PERSONNEL. HIS OCTOBER 17 DECREE ALSO DIRECTED ALL PORTUGUESE CITIZENS TO TURN IN ALL ILLEGAL WEAPONS TO DESIGNATED COLLECTION POINTS WITHIN SEVEN DAYS. PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE INCLUDE 2 TO 8 YEARS IN PRISON AND FINES OF UP TO 1 MILLION ESCUDOS (US\$40,000). WHILE THE "TOUGHNESS" OF THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT IS A WELCOME RELIEF FROM HIS ACCUSTOMED FENCE SITTING ON DIFFICULT OR CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES, WE ASSUME THAT THE PINHEIRO AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE AS MUCH SUCCESS WITH FORCING THE ULTRA-LEFT TO DISARM AS IT HAS HAD IN IMPOSING MILITARY DISCIPLINE IN THE ARMED FORCES.

4. FINALLY, THE EC-9 IS FOLLOWING UP ON ITS ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PLEDGE OF TWO WEEKS AGO. AN EC-9 TECHNICAL TEAM VISITED LISBON OCTOBER 20-21 TO DISCUSS THE EC AID PROGRAM AND THE CREATION OF A JOINT EC-PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC COMMISSION. AS FOR THE JOINT US-PORTUGUESE ECONOMIC COMMISSION PROPOSED BY ANTUNES TO THE SECRETARY ON OCTOBER 10, AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI HAS ADVISED ANTUNES HE IS READY TO DISCUSS ITS FORMATION BUT A MEETING HAS

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NOT YET BEEN POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF ANTUNES' SCHEDULE. INGERSOLL

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